



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Everglades and
Dry Tortugas
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Dry Tortugas National Park News Release

For Immediate Release
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NEW PARK ENTRANCE FEE TO TAKE EFFECT JUNE 1

Dry Tortugas National Park, FL: In line with the terms of its new General Management Plan a new visitor entrance fee will be instituted for Dry Tortugas National Park beginning Sunday, June 1, 2003. The new fee of \$5.00 per person (17 and older) will be collected from all visitors, including passengers travelling to the park on either of two permitted ferry boat operations and one permitted seaplane service. All services originate from Key West.

In announcing the fee, Park Superintendent Maureen Finnerty noted the concept had been reviewed in a series of public meetings during the planning process. "Visitation to the park has increased dramatically over recent years, and the public has expressed support for limiting the associated negative impacts to the park's unique and fragile resources. This new fee will help to increase available funds to support the park's conservation needs", said Finnerty.

Each year since 1996 Congress has provided a system by which 80% of collected fees may be retained to support operations, resource management and conservation programs. This will be true for Dry Tortugas National Park fees. New fees will not apply to holders of the National Parks Pass, Golden Eagle, Golden Age, and Golden Access Passports. These are valid for the pass holder(s) whose signature appears on the card and their immediate family including spouse, parents, and children residing in the same household.

Some of the projects proposed to benefit from the new fee revenues include: replacement of picnic tables and grills in the campground; updating and revision of visitor center exhibits; work to allow the reopening of the historic powder magazine on the Fort's self guiding trail; restoration of the historic hot shot furnace; development of a self guiding audio tour of the Fort; and, support of continuing projects to inventory and monitor unique coral reef environments and sea turtle nesting.

Questions about the new fees may be directed to 305/242-7700.

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